

Fishery Conservation and Management

§ 635.27

this part only in or from those management areas for which the United States has received an allocation.

(b) *Exemptions.* Persons and vessels subject to the jurisdiction of the United States intending to fish for regulated species in fishing areas not otherwise authorized under this part, whether for the purposes of scientific research or commercial fishing under a chartering arrangement, must have a permit from NMFS issued under § 635.32.

(c) *Atlantic bluefin tuna.* No person aboard a U.S. fishing vessel shall fish for bluefin tuna in, or possess on board that fishing vessel a bluefin tuna taken from, the Mediterranean Sea.

[67 FR 70026, Nov. 20, 2002]

§ 635.26 Catch and release.

(a) *BFT.* (1) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this part, a person aboard a vessel issued a permit under this part, other than a person aboard a vessel permitted in the General category on a designated RFD, may fish with rod and reel or handline gear for BFT under a catch-and-release or tag-and-release program. When fishing under a tag-and-release program, vessel owner/operators should use tags issued or approved by NMFS. If a BFT is tagged, the tag information, including information on any previously applied tag remaining on the fish, must be reported to NMFS. All BFT caught under the catch-and-release or tag-and-release programs must be returned to the sea immediately with a minimum of injury.

(2) Persons may obtain NMFS-issued conventional tags, reporting cards, and detailed instructions for their use from the NMFS Cooperative Tagging Center. Persons may use a conventional tag obtained from a source other than NMFS to tag BFT, provided the use of such tags is registered each year with the Cooperative Tagging Center and the NMFS program manager has approved the use of a conventional tag from that source. An angler using an alternative source of tags wishing to tag BFT may contact the NMFS Cooperative Tagging Center at the Southeast Fishery Science Center.

(3) An angler registering for the HMS tagging program is required to provide

his or her name, address, phone number and, if applicable, the identity of the alternate source of tags.

(b) *Billfish.* NMFS is encouraging further catch and release of Atlantic billfish by establishing a recreational catch-and-release fishery management program, consistent with the guidance of § 600.350(c).

(c) *Sharks.* Notwithstanding the other provisions of this part, a person may fish for white sharks (*Carcharodon carcharias*) with rod and reel, provided the person releases such fish to the sea immediately with a minimum of injury, and that such fish may not be removed from the water.

[64 FR 29135, May 28, 1999, as amended at 65 FR 42887, July 12, 2000; 70 FR 10900, Mar. 7, 2005]

§ 635.27 Quotas.

(a) *BFT.* Consistent with ICCAT recommendations, and with paragraph (a)(10)(iv) of this section, NMFS may subtract the most recent, complete, and available estimate of dead discards from the annual U.S. BFT quota, and make the remainder available to be retained, possessed, or landed by persons and vessels subject to U.S. jurisdiction. The remaining baseline annual U.S. BFT quota will be allocated among the General, Angling, Harpoon, Purse Seine, Longline, Trap, and Reserve categories. BFT may be taken by persons aboard vessels issued Atlantic Tunas permits, HMS Angling permits, or HMS Charter/Headboat permits. The baseline annual U.S. BFT quota is 923.7 mt, not including an additional annual 25 mt allocation provided in paragraph (a)(3) of this section. The baseline annual U.S. BFT quota is divided among the categories as follows: General—47.1 percent (435.1 mt); Angling—19.7 percent (182.0 mt), which includes the school BFT held in reserve as described under paragraph (a)(7)(ii) of this section; Harpoon—3.9 percent (36.0 mt); Purse Seine—18.6 percent (171.8 mt); Longline—8.1 percent (74.8 mt), which does not include the additional annual 25 mt allocation provided in paragraph (a)(3) of this section; and Trap—0.1 percent (0.9 mt). The remaining 2.5 percent (23.1 mt) of the baseline annual U.S. BFT quota will be held in reserve for inseason or annual adjustments based

on the criteria in paragraph (a)(8) of this section. NMFS may apportion a quota allocated to any category to specified fishing periods or to geographic areas and will make annual adjustments to quotas, as specified in paragraph (a)(10) of this section. BFT quotas are specified in whole weight.

(1) *General category quota.* In accordance with the framework procedures of the HMS FMP, NMFS will publish in the FEDERAL REGISTER, prior to the beginning of each fishing year or as early as feasible, the General category effort control schedule, including daily retention limits and restricted-fishing days.

(i) Catches from vessels for which General category Atlantic Tunas permits have been issued and certain catches from vessels for which an HMS Charter/Headboat permit has been issued are counted against the General category quota in accordance with § 635.23(c)(3). The amount of large medium and giant BFT that may be caught, retained, possessed, landed, or sold under the General category quota is 47.1 percent (435.1 mt) of the baseline annual U.S. BFT quota, and is apportioned as follows:

(A) January 1 through January 31—5.3 percent (23.1 mt);

(B) June 1 through August 31—50 percent (217.6 mt);

(C) September 1 through September 30—26.5 percent (115.3 mt);

(D) October 1 through November 30—13 percent (56.6 mt); and

(E) December 1 through December 31—5.2 percent (22.6 mt).

(ii) NMFS will adjust each period's apportionment based on overharvest or underharvest in the prior period.

(iii) When the coastwide General category fishery has been closed in any quota period specified under paragraph (a)(1)(i) of this section, NMFS will publish a closure action as specified in § 635.28. The subsequent time-period subquota will automatically open in accordance with the dates specified under paragraph (a)(1)(i) of this section.

(2) *Angling category quota.* In accordance with the framework procedures of the Consolidated HMS FMP, prior to each fishing year, or as early as feasible, NMFS will establish the Angling category daily retention limits. The

total amount of BFT that may be caught, retained, possessed, and landed by anglers aboard vessels for which an HMS Angling permit or an HMS Charter/Headboat permit has been issued is 19.7 percent (182 mt) of the baseline annual U.S. BFT quota. No more than 2.3 percent (4.2 mt) of the annual Angling category quota may be large medium or giant BFT. In addition, over each 2-consecutive-year period (starting in 2011, inclusive), no more than 10 percent of the annual U.S. BFT quota, inclusive of the allocation specified in paragraph (a)(3) of this section, may be school BFT. The Angling category quota includes the amount of school BFT held in reserve under paragraph (a)(7)(ii) of this section. The size class subquotas for BFT are further subdivided as follows:

(i) After adjustment for the school BFT quota held in reserve (under paragraph (a)(7)(ii) of this section), 52.8 percent (40.8 mt) of the school BFT Angling category quota may be caught, retained, possessed, or landed south of 39°18' N. lat. The remaining school BFT Angling category quota (36.5 mt) may be caught, retained, possessed or landed north of 39°18' N. lat.

(ii) An amount equal to 52.8 percent (43.8 mt) of the large school/small medium BFT Angling category quota may be caught, retained, possessed, or landed south of 39°18' N. lat. The remaining large school/small medium BFT Angling category quota (39.1 mt) may be caught, retained, possessed or landed north of 39°18' N. lat.

(iii) An amount equal to 66.7 percent (2.8 mt) of the large medium and giant BFT Angling category quota may be caught, retained, possessed, or landed south of 39°18' N. lat. The remaining large medium and giant BFT Angling category quota (1.4 mt) may be caught, retained, possessed or landed north of 39°18' N. lat.

(3) *Longline category quota.* The total amount of large medium and giant BFT that may be caught incidentally and retained, possessed, or landed by vessels that possess Longline category Atlantic Tunas permits is 8.1 percent (74.8 mt) of the baseline annual U.S. BFT quota. No more than 60.0 percent (44.9 mt) of the Longline category quota may be allocated for landing in

the area south of 31°00' N. lat. In addition, 25 mt shall be allocated for incidental catch by pelagic longline vessels fishing in the Northeast Distant gear restricted area.

(4) *Purse Seine category quota.* (i) The total amount of large medium and giant BFT that may be caught, retained, possessed, or landed by vessels that possess Purse Seine category Atlantic Tunas permits is 18.6 percent (171.8 mt) of the baseline annual U.S. BFT quota. The directed purse seine fishery for BFT commences on July 15 of each year unless NMFS takes action to delay the season start date. Based on cumulative and projected landings in other commercial fishing categories, and the potential for gear conflicts on the fishing grounds or market impacts due to oversupply, NMFS may delay the BFT purse seine season start date from July 15 to no later than August 15 by filing an adjustment with the Office of the FEDERAL REGISTER prior to July 1. The Purse Seine category fishery closes on December 31 of each year.

(ii) An owner of a vessel for which a Purse Seine category Atlantic Tunas permit has been issued must apply in writing to NMFS at an address designated by NMFS, for an allocation of BFT from the Purse Seine category quota. The application must be postmarked no later than April 15 for an allocation of the quota that becomes available on June 1.

(iii) On or about May 1 of each year, NMFS will make equal allocations of the available size classes of BFT among purse seine vessel permit holders so requesting, adjusted as necessary to account for underharvest or overharvest by each participating vessel or the vessel it replaces from the previous fishing year, consistent with paragraph (a)(10)(i) of this section. Such allocations are freely transferable, in whole or in part, among vessels that have Purse Seine category Atlantic Tunas permits. Any purse seine vessel permit holder intending to land bluefin tuna under an allocation transferred from another purse seine vessel permit holder must provide written notice of such intent to NMFS, at an address designated by NMFS, 3 days before landing any such bluefin tuna. Such notification must include the transfer date,

amount (in metric tons) transferred, and the permit numbers of vessels involved in the transfer. Trip or seasonal catch limits otherwise applicable under § 635.23(e) are not affected by transfers of bluefin tuna allocation. Purse seine vessel permit holders who, through landing and/or transfer, have no remaining bluefin tuna allocation may not use their permitted vessels in any fishery in which Atlantic bluefin tuna might be caught, regardless of whether bluefin tuna are retained.

(iv) An owner of a vessel for which a Purse Seine category Atlantic Tunas permit has been issued may apply to NMFS to permanently consolidate Purse Seine category vessel permits issued under § 635.4. Upon written approval of consolidation by NMFS, the Purse Seine Category Atlantic Tunas Permit of a transferring vessel will be canceled, and the receiving owner may apply for allocations of BFT commensurate with the number of consolidated permits. An owner of a purse seine vessel whose permit is canceled through consolidation may not use his or her vessel in any purse seine fishery in which BFT might be caught.

(5) *Harpoon category quota.* The total amount of large medium and giant BFT that may be caught, retained, possessed, landed, or sold by vessels that possess Harpoon category Atlantic Tunas permits is 3.9 percent (36.0 mt) of the baseline annual U.S. BFT quota. The Harpoon category fishery commences on June 1 of each year, and closes on November 15 of each year.

(6) *Trap category quota.* The total amount of large medium and giant BFT that may be caught, retained, possessed, or landed by vessels that possess Trap category Atlantic Tunas permits is 0.1 percent (1.0 mt) of the baseline annual U.S. BFT quota.

(7) *Reserve.* (i) The total amount of BFT that is held in reserve for inseason or annual adjustments and fishery-independent research using quotas or subquotas is 2.5 percent (23.1 mt) of the baseline annual U.S. BFT quota. Consistent with paragraph (a)(8) of this section, NMFS may allocate any portion of this reserve for inseason or annual adjustments to any category quota in the fishery.

(ii) The total amount of school BFT that is held in reserve for inseason or annual adjustments and fishery-independent research is 18.5 percent (17.6 mt) of the total school BFT Angling category quota as described under paragraph (a)(2) of this section. This amount is in addition to the amounts specified in paragraph (a)(7)(i) of this section. Consistent with paragraph (a)(8) of this section, NMFS may allocate any portion of the school BFT Angling category quota held in reserve for inseason or annual adjustments to the Angling category.

(8) *Determination criteria.* NMFS will file with the Office of the FEDERAL REGISTER for publication notification of any inseason or annual adjustments. Before making any adjustment, NMFS will consider the following criteria and other relevant factors:

(i) The usefulness of information obtained from catches in the particular category for biological sampling and monitoring of the status of the stock.

(ii) The catches of the particular category quota to date and the likelihood of closure of that segment of the fishery if no adjustment is made.

(iii) The projected ability of the vessels fishing under the particular category quota to harvest the additional amount of BFT before the end of the fishing year.

(iv) The estimated amounts by which quotas for other gear categories of the fishery might be exceeded.

(v) Effects of the adjustment on BFT rebuilding and overfishing.

(vi) Effects of the adjustment on accomplishing the objectives of the fishery management plan.

(vii) Variations in seasonal distribution, abundance, or migration patterns of BFT.

(viii) Effects of catch rates in one area precluding vessels in another area from having a reasonable opportunity to harvest a portion of the category's quota.

(ix) Review of dealer reports, daily landing trends, and the availability of the BFT on the fishing grounds.

(9) *Inseason adjustments.* Within a fishing year, NMFS may transfer quotas among categories or, as appropriate, subcategories, based on the criteria in paragraph (a)(8) of this section.

NMFS may transfer inseason any portion of the remaining quota of a fishing category to any other fishing category or to the reserve as specified in paragraph (a)(7) of this section.

(10) *Annual adjustments.* (i) If NMFS determines, based on landings statistics and other available information, that a BFT quota for any category or, as appropriate, subcategory has been exceeded or has not been reached, with the exception of the Purse Seine category, NMFS shall subtract the overharvest from, or add the underharvest to, that quota category for the following fishing year. These adjustments would be made provided that the underharvest being carried forward does not exceed 100 percent of each category's baseline allocation specified in paragraph (a) of this section, and the total of the adjusted category quotas and the reserve are consistent with ICCAT recommendations. For the Purse Seine category, if NMFS determines, based on landings statistics and other available information, that a purse seine vessel's allocation, as adjusted, has been exceeded or has not been reached, NMFS shall subtract the overharvest from, or add the underharvest to, that vessel's allocation for the following fishing year. Purse seine vessel adjustments would take place provided that the underharvest being carried forward does not exceed 100 percent of the purse seine category baseline allocation. Any of the unharvested quota amounts being carried forward, as described in this paragraph, that exceed the 100 percent limit will be transferred to the reserve, or another domestic quota category provided the transfers are consistent with paragraph (a)(8) of this section.

(ii) NMFS may allocate any quota remaining in the reserve at the end of a fishing year to any fishing category, provided such allocation is consistent with the criteria specified in paragraph (a)(8) of this section.

(iii) Regardless of the estimated landings in any year, NMFS may adjust the annual school BFT quota to ensure that the average take of school BFT over each 2-consecutive-year period beginning in the 2009 fishing year does not exceed 10 percent by weight of

the total annual U.S. BFT quota, inclusive of the allocation specified in paragraph (a)(3) of this section, for that period.

(iv) NMFS may subtract the best available estimate of dead discards from the amount of BFT that can be landed in the subsequent fishing year by those categories accounting for the dead discards.

(v) NMFS will file any annual adjustment with the Office of the FEDERAL REGISTER for publication and specify the basis for any quota reductions or increases made pursuant to this paragraph (a)(10).

(b) *Sharks*—(1) *Commercial quotas*. The commercial quotas for sharks specified in paragraphs (b)(1)(i) through (b)(1)(vi) of this section apply to all sharks harvested from the management unit, regardless of where harvested. Sharks taken and landed from state waters, even by fishermen without Federal shark permits, must be counted against the fishery quota. Commercial quotas are specified for each of the management groups of sandbar sharks, non-sandbar LCS, SCS, blue sharks, porbeagle sharks, and pelagic sharks other than blue or porbeagle sharks. Any sharks landed as unclassified will be counted against the appropriate species' quota based on the species composition calculated from data collected by observers on non-research trips and/or dealer data. No prohibited sharks, including parts or pieces of prohibited sharks, which are listed under heading D of Table 1 of Appendix A to this part, may be retained except as authorized under § 635.32.

(i) *Annual adjustments*. NMFS will publish in the FEDERAL REGISTER any annual adjustments to the base annual commercial quotas or the 2008 through 2012 adjusted base quotas. The base annual quota and the adjusted base annual quota will not be available, and the fishery will not open, until such adjustments are published and effective in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(A) *Overharvests*. Except as noted in this paragraph, if the available commercial quota for any shark species or complex, as described in this section, is exceeded in any fishing year, NMFS will deduct an amount equivalent to the overharvest(s) from the following

fishing year or, depending on the level of overharvest(s), NMFS may deduct an amount equivalent to the overharvest(s) spread over a number of subsequent fishing years to a maximum of five years. If the annual quota for non-sandbar LCS is exceeded in either region (*see* section (b)(1)(iii)(B)) or in the research fishery in any fishing year, NMFS will deduct an amount equivalent to the overharvest(s) from the following fishing year or, depending on the level of overharvest(s), NMFS may deduct an amount equivalent to the overharvest(s) spread over a number of subsequent fishing years to a maximum of five years, in the specific region or research fishery where the overharvest occurred. If the blue shark quota is exceeded, NMFS will reduce the annual commercial quota for pelagic sharks by the amount that the blue shark quota is exceeded prior to the start of the next fishing year or, depending on the level of overharvest(s), deduct an amount equivalent to the overharvest(s) spread over a number of subsequent fishing years to a maximum of five years.

(B) *Underharvests*. Except as noted in this paragraph, if an annual quota for any shark species or complex, as described in this section, is not exceeded, NMFS may adjust the annual quota depending on the status of the stock or quota group. If the annual quota for non-sandbar LCS is not exceeded in either region or in the research fishery, NMFS may adjust the annual quota in either region (*see* paragraph (b)(1)(iii)(B) of this section) or the research fishery depending on the status of the stock or quota group. If the stock (*e.g.*, sandbar shark, porbeagle shark, pelagic shark, or blue shark) or specific species within a quota group (*e.g.*, non-sandbar LCS or non-blacknose SCS) is declared to be overfished, to have overfishing occurring, or to have an unknown status, NMFS may not adjust the following fishing year's quota for any underharvest, and the following fishing year's quota will be equal to the base annual quota (or the adjusted base quota for sandbar and non-sandbar LCS until December 31, 2012). If the stock is not declared to be overfished, to have overfishing occurring, or to have an unknown status,

NMFS may increase the following year's base annual quota (or the adjusted base quota for sandbar and non-sandbar LCS until December 31, 2012) by an equivalent amount of the underharvest up to 50 percent above the base annual quota. For the non-sandbar LCS fishery, underharvests are not transferable between regions and/or the research fishery.

(ii) *Opening fishing season criteria.* NMFS will file with the Office of the Federal Register for publication notification of the opening dates of the shark fishery for each species/complex. Before making any decisions, NMFS would consider the following criteria and other relevant factors in establishing the opening dates:

(A) The available annual quotas for the current fishing season for the different species/complexes based on any over- and/or underharvests experienced during the previous commercial shark fishing seasons;

(B) Estimated season length based on available quota(s) and average weekly catch rates of different species/complexes in the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico regions from the previous years;

(C) Length of the season for the different species/complexes in the previous years and whether fishermen were able to participate in the fishery in those years;

(D) Variations in seasonal distribution, abundance, or migratory patterns of the different species/complexes based on scientific and fishery information;

(E) Effects of catch rates in one part of a region precluding vessels in another part of that region from having a reasonable opportunity to harvest a portion of the different species/complexes quotas;

(F) Effects of the adjustment on accomplishing the objectives of the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP and its amendments; and/or,

(G) Effects of a delayed opening with regard to fishing opportunities in other fisheries.

(iii) *Sandbar sharks.* The base annual commercial quota for sandbar sharks is 116.6 mt dw. However, from July 24, 2008 through December 31, 2012, to account for overharvests that occurred in 2007, the adjusted base quota is 87.9 mt dw. Both the base quota and the ad-

justed base quota may be further adjusted per paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section. This quota is available only to the owners of commercial shark vessels that have been issued a valid shark research permit and that have a NMFS-approved observer onboard.

(iv) *Non-sandbar LCS.* (A) The total base quota for non-sandbar LCS is 677.8 mt dw. This base quota is split between the two regions and the shark research fishery as follows: Gulf of Mexico = 439.5 mt dw; Atlantic = 188.3 mt dw; and Shark Research Fishery = 50 mt dw. However, from July 24, 2008 through December 31, 2012, to account for overharvests that occurred in 2007, the total adjusted base quota is 615.8 mt dw. This adjusted base quota is split between the regions and the shark research fishery as follows: Gulf of Mexico = 390.5 mt dw; Atlantic = 187.8 mt dw; and Shark Research Fishery = 37.5 mt dw. Both the base quota and the adjusted base quota may be further adjusted per paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section.

(B) The commercial quotas for non-sandbar LCS are split between two regions: the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic. For the purposes of this section, the boundary between the Gulf of Mexico region and the Atlantic region is defined as a line beginning on the east coast of Florida at the mainland at 25°20.4' N. lat, proceeding due east. Any water and land to the south and west of that boundary is considered, for the purposes of quota monitoring and setting of quotas, to be within the Gulf of Mexico region. Any water and land to the north and east of that boundary, for the purposes of quota monitoring and setting of quotas, is considered to be within the Atlantic region.

(C) Except for non-sandbar LCS landed by vessels issued a valid shark research permit with a NMFS-approved observer onboard, any non-sandbar LCS reported by dealers located in the Florida Keys areas or in the Gulf of Mexico will be counted against the non-sandbar LCS Gulf of Mexico regional quota. Except for non-sandbar LCS landed by vessels issued a valid shark research permit with a NMFS-approved observer onboard, any non-sandbar LCS reported by dealers located in the Atlantic region will be

counted against the non-sandbar LCS Atlantic regional quota. Non-sandbar LCS landed by a vessel issued a valid shark research permit with a NMFS-approved observer onboard will be counted against the non-sandbar LCS research fishery quota using scientific observer reports.

(v) *Small coastal sharks.* The base annual commercial quota for non-blacknose small coastal sharks is 221.6 mt dw, unless adjusted pursuant to paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section. The base annual commercial quota for blacknose sharks is 19.9 mt dw, unless adjusted pursuant to paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section.

(vi) *Pelagic sharks.* The base annual commercial quotas for pelagic sharks are 273 mt dw for blue sharks, 1.7 mt dw for porbeagle sharks, and 488 mt dw for pelagic sharks other than blue sharks or porbeagle sharks, unless adjusted pursuant to paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section.

(vii) *Smoothhound sharks.* The base annual commercial quota for smoothhound sharks is 715.5 mt dw, unless adjusted pursuant to paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section.

(2) *Public display and non-specific research quotas.* All sharks collected under the authority of a display permit or EFP, subject to restrictions at § 635.32, will be counted against the following:

(i) The base annual quota for persons who collect non-sandbar LCS, SCS, pelagic sharks, blue sharks, porbeagle sharks, or prohibited species under a display permit or EFP is 57.2 mt ww (41.2 mt dw).

(ii) The base annual quota for persons who collect sandbar sharks under a display permit is 1.4 mt ww (1 mt dw) and under an EFP is 1.4 mt ww (1 mt dw).

(iii) No persons may collect dusky sharks under a display permit. Collection of dusky sharks for research under EFPs and/or SRPs may be considered on a case by case basis and any associated mortality would be deducted from the shark research and display quota.

(iv) The base annual quota for persons who collect smoothhound sharks under a display permit or EFP is 6 mt ww (4.3 mt dw).

(c) *Swordfish*—(1) *Categories.* Consistent with ICCAT recommendations,

the fishing year's total amount of swordfish that may be caught, retained, possessed, or landed by persons and vessels subject to U.S. jurisdiction is divided into quotas for the North Atlantic swordfish stock and the South Atlantic swordfish stock. The quota for the North Atlantic swordfish stock is further divided into equal semi-annual directed fishery quotas, an annual incidental catch quota for fishermen targeting other species or taking swordfish recreationally, and a reserve category.

(i) *North Atlantic swordfish.* (A) A swordfish from the North Atlantic stock caught prior to the directed fishery closure by a vessel for which a directed fishery permit, or a handgear permit for swordfish, has been issued or is required to be issued is counted against the directed fishery quota. The annual fishery quota, not adjusted for over- or underharvests, is 2,937.6 mt dw for each fishing year. After December 31, 2007, the annual quota is subdivided into two equal semi-annual quotas of 1,468.8 mt dw: one for January 1 through June 30, and the other for July 1 through December 31.

(B) A swordfish from the North Atlantic swordfish stock landed by a vessel for which an incidental catch permit for swordfish or an HMS Angling or Charter/Headboat or Incidental HMS squid trawl permit has been issued, or caught after the effective date of a closure of the directed fishery from a vessel for which a directed fishery permit or a handgear permit for swordfish has been issued, is counted against the incidental catch quota.

(C) All swordfish discarded dead from U.S. fishing vessels, regardless of whether such vessels are permitted under this part, shall be counted against the annual directed fishing quota.

(D) A portion of the total allowable catch of North Atlantic swordfish may be held in reserve for inseason adjustments to fishing categories, to compensate for projected or actual overharvest in any category, for fishery independent research, for transfer to another ICCAT contracting party, or for other purposes consistent with management objectives.

(E) In the event of an overharvest of South Atlantic swordfish, up to 150.4 mt dw of swordfish landed between 5 degrees North and 5 degrees South latitude may be applied against the North Atlantic swordfish quota. Otherwise, swordfish landed from this area shall be applied against the South Atlantic swordfish quota. For example, if the South Atlantic swordfish quota were 100 mt dw, and 50 mt dw were landed between 5 degrees North and 5 degrees South latitude, and 75 mt dw were caught south of 5 degrees South latitude, then 25 mt dw of the swordfish caught between 5 degrees North and 5 degrees South latitude would be applied against the North Atlantic swordfish quota. If only 25 mt dw of swordfish were caught between 5 degrees North and 5 degrees South latitude, and 150 mt dw of swordfish were caught south of 5 degrees South latitude, 25 mt dw would be applied against the North Atlantic swordfish quota. The remaining 50 mt dw overharvest would be counted against the following year's South Atlantic swordfish quota.

(ii) *South Atlantic Swordfish.* The annual directed fishery quota for the South Atlantic swordfish stock is 75.2 mt dw. After December 31, 2007, the annual quota is subdivided into two equal semi-annual quotas of 37.6 mt dw: one for January 1 through June 30, and the other for July 1 through December 31. The entire quota for the South Atlantic swordfish stock is reserved for vessels with pelagic longline gear onboard and that have been issued a directed fishery permit for swordfish. No person may retain swordfish caught incidental to other fishing activities or with other fishing gear in the Atlantic Ocean south of 5 degrees North latitude.

(2) *Inseason adjustments.* (i) NMFS may adjust the July 1 through December 31 semiannual directed fishery quota or, as applicable, the reserve category, to reflect actual directed fishery and incidental fishing category catches during the January 1 through June 30 semiannual period.

(ii) If NMFS determines that the annual incidental catch quota will not be taken before the end of the fishing year, the excess quota may be allocated to the directed fishery quota or to the reserve.

(iii) If NMFS determines that it is necessary to close the directed swordfish fishery prior to the scheduled end of a semi-annual fishing season, any estimated overharvest or underharvest of the directed fishery quota for that semi-annual season will be used to adjust the annual incidental catch quota or the reserve as necessary to maintain landings and discards within the required annual limits.

(iv) NMFS will file with the Office of the FEDERAL REGISTER for publication any inseason swordfish quota adjustment and its apportionment to fishing categories or to the reserve made under paragraph (c)(2) of this section.

(3) *Annual adjustments.* (i) Except for the carryover provisions of paragraphs (c)(3)(ii) and (iii) of this section, NMFS will file with the Office of the Federal Register for publication notification of any adjustment to the annual quota necessary to meet the objectives of the Consolidated Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan.

(ii) If consistent with applicable ICCAT recommendations, total landings above or below the specific North Atlantic or South Atlantic swordfish annual quota will be subtracted from, or added to, the following year(s) quota for that area. As necessary to meet management objectives, such carryover adjustments may be apportioned to fishing categories and/or to the reserve. Carryover adjustments for the North Atlantic shall be limited to 50 percent of the baseline quota allocation for that year. Carryover adjustments for the South Atlantic shall be limited to 100 mt ww (75.2 mt dw) for that year. Any adjustments to the 12-month directed fishery quota will be apportioned equally between the two semiannual fishing seasons. NMFS will file with the Office of the Federal Register for publication any adjustment or apportionment made under this paragraph.

(iii) The dressed weight equivalent of the amount by which dead discards exceed the allowance specified at paragraph (c)(1)(i)(C) of this section will be subtracted from the landings quota in the following fishing year or from the reserve category. NMFS will file with the Office of the FEDERAL REGISTER for

publication any adjustment made under this paragraph (c)(3)(iii).

(d) *Atlantic blue and white marlin.* (1) Effective January 1, 2007, and consistent with ICCAT recommendations and domestic management objectives, NMFS will establish the annual landings limit of Atlantic blue and white marlin to be taken, retained, or possessed by persons and vessels subject to U.S. jurisdiction. For the year 2007 and thereafter, unless adjusted under paragraph (d)(2) of this section or by ICCAT recommendation, this annual landings limit is 250 Atlantic blue and white marlin, combined. Effective January 1, 2011, annual landings of roundscale spearfish are also included to the blue and white marlin annual landings limit. Should the U.S. recreational Atlantic marlin landing limit be adjusted by an ICCAT recommendation, NMFS will file a notice identifying the new landing limit with the Office of the FEDERAL REGISTER for publication prior to the start of the next fishing year or as early as possible.

(2) Consistent with ICCAT recommendations and domestic management objectives, and based on landings statistics and other information as appropriate, if NMFS determines that aggregate landings of Atlantic blue marlin, white marlin, and roundscale spearfish exceeded the annual landings limit for a given fishing year, as established in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, NMFS will subtract any overharvest from the landings limit for the following fishing year. Additionally, if NMFS determines that aggregate landings of Atlantic blue marlin, white marlin, and roundscale spearfish were below the annual landings limit for a given fishing year, as established in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, NMFS may add any underharvest, or portion thereof, to the landings limit for the following fishing year. Such adjustments to the annual recreational marlin landings limit, as specified in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, if necessary, will be filed with the Office of the FEDERAL REGISTER for publication prior to the start of the next fishing year or as early as possible.

(3) When the annual marlin landings limit specified in paragraph (d)(1) or, if adjusted, as specified in paragraph

(d)(2) of this section is reached or projected to be reached, based upon a review of landings, the period of time remaining in the current fishing year, current and historical landings trends, and any other relevant factors, NMFS will file for publication with the Office of the FEDERAL REGISTER and action restricting fishing for Atlantic blue marlin, white marlin, and roundscale spearfish to catch-and-release fishing only. In no case shall such adjustment be effective less than 14 calendar days after the date of publication. From the effective date and time of such action until additional landings become available, no blue marlin, white marlin, or roundscale spearfish from the management unit may be taken, retained, or possessed.

[64 FR 29135, May 23, 1999]

EDITORIAL NOTE: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 635.27, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.fdsys.gov.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTES: 1. At 75 FR 30527, June 1, 2010, § 635.27 was amended by revising paragraphs (b)(1)(vii), and (2)(iv). These paragraphs contain information collection and recordkeeping requirements and will not become effective until approval has been given by the Office of Management and Budget.

2. At 76 FR 56123, Sept. 12, 2011, § 635.27 was amended by revising paragraph (c)(1)(i)(B), effective October 12, 2011. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 635.27 Quotas.

* * * * *

(c) * * *

(1) * * *

(i) * * *

(B) A swordfish from the North Atlantic swordfish stock landed by a vessel for which an incidental catch permit for swordfish or an HMS Angling or Charter/Headboat permit has been issued, or caught after the effective date of a closure of the directed fishery from a vessel for which a directed fishery permit or a handgear permit for swordfish has been issued, is counted against the incidental catch quota. The annual incidental category quota is 300 mt dw for each fishing year.

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